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Totalitarianism and Historical Necessity

D. S. SAVAGE

With time, two facts are being made inescapably clear. One is that in our day a period in man's history is drawing to a close. The other is that totalitarianism is a world-wide factor intimately connected with this historical change. To understand the nature of totalitarianism is to possess a key to the understanding of the evolution of man and society in our time.

The popular conception of totalitarianism as an isolated "political" phenomenon arising in one or two foreign countries as a consequence of the seizure of power by gangs of ruthless ruffians will not stand a moment's serious examination; and not much more satisfactory is the Left theory of Fascism as the last desperate measure of a declining capitalist ruling class faced with the threat of a revolutionary proletariat.

Structurally considered, totalitarianism has arisen as a final consequence of the mechanisation of society which has proceeded with increasing momentum since the Industrial Revolution. At the heart of totalitarianism, ethically considered, there lies a denial of the significance of the individual. But

this denial is not a brand-new product of Fascist rule-by-violence. It was present, implicitly, in the "economic individualism" which provided the dynamic of the nineteenth century's industrial expansion. This economic individualism was in turn the result of the exteriorisation, in the field of social relationships, of that humanistic affirmation of individuality which occurred as the Renaissance broke away from the social synthesis of the Middle Ages. The doctrine of economic individualism began with the petrification of rationalistic humanism into a social formula which affirmed, not the individual's integral being, but his exterior qualities, and then his possessions. The doctrine of economic man formulated by the nineteenth century economists was that of man considered as an appendage to his property.

Beginning on this basis, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have, by subjecting the human community to the impersonal evolution of the economic structure, forced a dislocation between man as a spiritual being and his society's exterior framework of economic relationships. Totalitarianism solves the resultant conflict, when it threatens

social stability, by a compulsory, exterior integration of man with society. There is thus no radical cleavage between capitalist industrialism and totalitarianism. The latter rationalises the conflicts of the former society by taking it over and clamping down the existing centralised pattern of industrialism over the nation's political existence, thus removing the "sentimental" contradictions inherent in capitalist democracy and achieving the consummation of economic individualism by the complete subjection of man to the State. State control is the culmination of the process of "trustification" which has occurred with the evolution of the industrial fabric. Henceforth, the whole of society turns round this one, exterior axis—the State. And the purpose of existence must be sought, not in the individual, but in the collective, the Nation, the Race. The essentially *historical* nature of Fascism becomes clearer when we realise the consequences of this. For the province, the operative area, of these gigantic collective entities, is History.

To understand totalitarianism in its emotional, as opposed to its structural, aspect, it is necessary to realise the essentially historical character of our era. If we compare the life of Europe with that of the East we at once perceive that between the two patterns of life there is all the difference between the dynamic and the static. To the age-long, traditional, repetitive life-pattern of the East, the West opposes a multiplicity of evolving forms. The East's pattern is timeless. That of the West is one of clearly distinguishable time-periods, which yet run into and determine one another. But in our day, consequent upon the impetus given to change by the unlimited exploitation of scientific technique, the tempo of history has undergone a terrific acceleration. History has entered upon a cataclysmic stage. And

Fascism is in essence a movement expressive of this historicity, with all its inflated romanticism of blood and race, in which the individual is submerged as in a turbulent flood.

From the point of view of the philosophies of History formulated by those prophets of Fascism of whom Spengler is perhaps a representative specimen, the individual person is negligible and attention is diverted from the limited life of this wretched creature to the pageantry of vast historic periods, the rise and fall of civilisations. It is impossible to resist the conclusion that this view of the individual's value arises out of the modern man's acute dissatisfaction with his own limited individual life, which he feels to be crushed in unbearably on all sides by vast impersonal forces which are beyond his control. The collectivisation of society, the integration of the individual as an economic and social unit into its outwardly centralised framework, has had the effect of depriving him of interior, vertical significance. Because of the fragmentary and dessicated quality of the contemporary man's experience, besides the atrophy of certain human faculties under robot conditions, our time is one of civilised barbarism, lacking as a whole even the religious and æsthetic apprehensions of the most backward savage tribe. With the decay of a religious approach to living and the consequent limiting of consciousness to the material plane deprived of its dimension of depth and value, there has disappeared any general sense of human purpose. Life is no longer lived in two directions, horizontal and vertical. The horizontal movement along time is dissociated from its vertical polarity with eternity, and consequently, when the modern man looks for a purpose, he looks for it outside himself. And to man a purposeless existence is intolerable.

When human existence was seen as a personal drama of salvation

and damnation, related intrinsically to a sphere of eternal reality, meaning and purpose resided within the individual and the single span of life was the focus for the vaster life that occurred outside it, everything was related to the drama proceeding within that framework. Horizontal social relationships were polarised by the vertical relationship of the individual to God and were therefore stabilised in a sense which is completely alien to the experience of the modern man. Thus society was related to the individual and the individual to God. Through the individual, society (and its history) were therefore rooted, though imperfectly, in eternity. The mechanisation of man and his subjection to the external life of the collective has had the effect of cutting off both man and, through him, society, from their integral centre. They are cut adrift into the stream of a dis-integrated time.

In this situation, social man, denied the interior satisfactions of a religious attitude, can find release only in surrender to those forces which impersonally shape and dominate his life, feeling through his identification with the collective in History that sense of exalted purpose which is denied him in his individual isolation. The strong appeal of Fascism, of hysterical nationalism, is explained by this. Fascism, quite explicitly, comes to the individual with empty hands, offering nothing, demanding his whole life. Yet it does offer purpose. It offers freedom from the burden of an individual existence in a world where individual values are efficiently and ruthlessly suppressed. And with the blood of the race or nation roaring through his veins, he shares ecstatically in the super-human, supercharged destiny of the collective.

The impulse of human beings to submit themselves to the false purposiveness of history, however, is one of desperation, taken because

there is no other apparent course. The mechanisation of humanity effected by industrialism and consummated by the totalitarian rationalisation of society succeeds, not of course in altering human nature, but in profoundly denying and frustrating it. The fact is that the soul of man cannot endure the nullity and vacuity of a personal life severed from all vertical sources, and man is driven to further and further measures of self-immolation by his anguished inner need for realisation within the service of some superior reality.

The individual's submission (which remains an individual act) is determined by social necessity. Having acquiesced in the exaltation of the collective and its needs over the effective world of the human community he finds its demands ever increasing in voracity as it expands under its own impersonal velocity away from the community of men, and he is powerless to refuse them. Why, then, if the collective's demands are in opposition to the true interests of humanity, should human beings submit to them? The answer is that they do not. Conscious persons, according to their lights, are always in opposition to the process. But they are few. The masses have already been subjected to the mechanising process, and in any case the masses as such always follow the line of least resistance, i.e., a horizontal one. The masses as such cannot rise up in revolt against totalitarianism because to do so they would have to lose their quality of mass, become individuals and challenge totalitarianism from their inward, vertical centrality, in the name of human values. Totalitarianism may in many cases go against the grain, like war. But opposition is too difficult and the price—of individual responsibility—too heavy; and the masses succumb, some in stupefied passivity and others with an enthusiasm born of desperation.

Totalitarianism's intimate connection with war becomes explicable in this light: it claims, for the collective, that purpose which in the nature of being, can only reside in the individual. In demanding the subordination of the individual to the collective it denies true purpose, since there can be no integral purpose except in relation to the eternal, and the eternal is reached only inwardly, through the individual with his source in eternal reality. Cheated of this true purpose, it has to find a spurious substitute along the horizontal level of time.

Once the totalitarian integration has been achieved it cannot perpetuate itself in a state of rest. And since it is unable to offer an integral purpose, reposing centripetally on its own axis (having denied the individual) it can only seek purpose outside itself and muster its feverish subjects in a chimerical assault upon historical destiny.

The indivisibility of totalitarianism and war is illustrated fully enough by the respective evolutions of Germany and Great Britain, both nations embodying the results of the individualistic impulse in their economic structures and therefore containing the germ of totalitarianism. But while Germany succumbed to totalitarianism as a preliminary to aggressive war, assuming a thoroughly military character from the beginning (significantly rooted in the defeated German army of the Great War), Great Britain, a peace-loving, "satisfied" democracy whose repugnance to war was explicitly and not hypocritically formulated in the statements of its two pre-war Prime Ministers, is being forced to move all the way towards the totalitarian integration by the demands of modern warfare, which she has entered upon belatedly and with reluctance. We who are living through this period experience within ourselves this opposition between the individual and the collective, whether we submit to or resist the

collective fiat. In time of peace, individuality could find expression, as it were, through vertical channels, in the personal life, but in time of war this verticality is swept away and the individual caught up in the horizontal, levelling sweep of events, or at the very least is so affected by them that his verticality is considerably constrained. War gives society a purpose, a *raison d'être*, which sets it moving as a unified organism without reference to the centrality of its individual components. That the purpose is one of destruction does not alter the case. Destruction as a social purpose can polarise society, give it shape, form, and significance, even though of a diabolical kind, just as well as construction can. In fact, the uniformity of the pattern it imposes upon society will be more pronounced. (*To be concluded*)

No, Not One

GEORGE ORWELL

Mr. Murry said years ago that the works of the best modern writers, Joyce, Eliot and the like, simply demonstrated the *impossibility* of great art in a time like the present, and since then we have moved onwards into a period in which any sort of joy in writing, any such notion as telling a story for the purpose of pure entertainment, has also become impossible. All writing nowadays is propaganda. If, therefore, I treat Mr. Comfort's novel* as a tract, I am only doing what he himself has done already. It is a good novel as novels go at this moment, but the motive for writing it was not what Trollope or Balzac, or even Tolstoy, would have recognised as a novelist's impulse. It was written in order to put forward the "mes-

**No Such Liberty*. By Alex Comfort (Chapman and Hall) 7s. 6d.

sage" of pacifism, and it was to fit that "message" that the main incidents in it were devised. I think I am also justified in assuming that it is autobiographical, not in the sense that the events described in it have actually happened, but in the sense that the author identifies himself with the hero, thinks him worthy of sympathy and agrees with the sentiments that he expresses.

Here is the outline of the story. A young German doctor who has been convalescent for two years in Switzerland returns to Cologne a little before Munich to find that his wife has been helping war-resisters to escape from the country and is in imminent danger of arrest. He and she flee to Holland just in time to escape the massacre which followed on Vom Rath's assassination. Partly by accident they reach England, he having been seriously wounded on the way. After his recovery he manages to get a hospital appointment, but at the outbreak of war he is brought before a tribunal and put in the B class of aliens. The reason for this is that he has declared that he will not fight against the Nazis, thinking it better to "overcome Hitler by love". Asked why he did not stay in Germany and overcome Hitler by love there, he admits that there is no answer. In the panic following on the invasion of the Low Countries he is arrested a few minutes after his wife has given birth to a baby and kept for a long time in a concentration camp where he cannot communicate with her and where the conditions of dirt, overcrowding, etc., are as bad as anything in Germany. Finally he is packed on to the "Arandora Star" (it is given another name, of course), sunk at sea, rescued, and put in another somewhat better camp. When he is at last released and makes contact with his wife, it is to find that she has been confined in another camp in which the baby has died of neg-

lect and underfeeding. The book ends with the couple looking forward to sailing for America and hoping that the war fever will not by this time have spread there as well.

Now, before considering the implications of this story, just consider one or two facts which underlie the structure of modern society and which it is necessary to ignore if the pacifist "message" is to be accepted uncritically.

(i) Civilisation rests ultimately on coercion. What holds society together is not the policeman but the good will of common men, and yet that good will is powerless unless the policeman is there to back it up. Any government which refused to use violence in its own defence would cease almost immediately to exist, because it could be overthrown by any body of men, or even any individual, that was less scrupulous. Objectively, whoever is not on the side of the policeman is on the side of the criminal, and vice versa. In so far as it hampers the British war effort, British pacifism is on the side of the Nazis, and German pacifism, if it exists, is on the side of Britain and the U.S.S.R. Since pacifists have more freedom of action in countries where traces of democracy survive, pacifism can act more effectively against democracy than for it. Objectively the pacifist is pro-Nazi.

(ii) Since coercion can never be altogether dispensed with, the only difference is between degrees of violence. During the last twenty years there has been less violence and less militarism inside the English-speaking world than outside it, because there has been more money and more security. The hatred of war which undoubtedly characterises the English-speaking peoples is a reflection of their favoured position. Pacifism is only a considerable force in places where people feel themselves very safe, chiefly maritime states. Even in

such places, turn-the-other-cheek pacifism only flourishes among the more prosperous classes, or among workers who have in some way escaped from their own class. The real working class, though they hate war and are immune to jingoism, are never really pacifist, because their life teaches them something different. To abjure violence it is necessary to have no experience of it.

If one keeps the above facts in mind one can, I think, see the events in Mr. Comfort's novel in truer perspective. It is a question of putting aside subjective feelings and trying to see whither one's actions will lead in practice and where one's motives ultimately spring from. The hero is a research worker—a pathologist. He has not been especially fortunate, he has a defective lung, thanks to the carrying-on of the British blockade into 1919, but in so far as he is a member of the middle class, doing work which he has chosen for himself, he is one of a few million favoured human beings who live ultimately on the degradation of the rest. He wants to get on with his work, wants to be out of reach of Nazi tyranny and regimentation, but he will not *act* against the Nazis in any other way than by running away from them. Arrived in England, he is in terror of being sent back to Germany, but refuses to take part in any physical effort to keep the Nazis out of England. His greatest hope is to get to America, with another three thousand miles of water between himself and the Nazis. He will only get there, you note, if British ships and planes protect him on the way, and having got there he will simply be living under the protection of American ships and planes instead of British ones. If he is lucky he will be able to continue with his work as a pathologist, at the same time keeping up his attitude of moral superiority towards the men who

make his work possible. And underlying everything there will still be his position as a research-worker, a favoured person living ultimately on dividends which would cease forthwith if not extorted by the threat of violence.

I do not think this is an unfair summary of Mr. Comfort's book. And I think the relevant fact is that this story of a German doctor is written by an Englishman. The argument which is implied all the way through, and sometimes explicitly stated, that there is next to no difference between Britain and Germany, political persecution is as bad in one as in the other, those who fight against the Nazis always go ~~Nazi~~ themselves, would be more convincing if it came from a German. There are probably sixty thousand German refugees in this country, and there would be hundreds of thousands more if we had not meanly kept them out. Why did they come here if there is virtually no difference between the social atmosphere of the two countries? And how many of them have asked to go back? They have "voted with their feet", as Lenin put it. As I pointed out above, the comparative gentleness of the English-speaking civilisation is due to money and security, but that is not to say that no difference exists. Once let it be admitted, however, that there is a certain difference, that it matters quite a lot who wins, and the usual short-term case for pacifism falls to the ground. You can be explicitly pro-Nazi without claiming to be a pacifist—and there is a very strong case for the Nazis, though not many people in this country have the courage to utter it—but you can only pretend that Nazism and capitalist democracy are Tweedledum and Tweedledee if you also pretend that every horror from the June purge onwards has been cancelled by an exactly similar horror in England. In practice this has to be done by means of selection and

exaggeration. Mr. Comfort is in effect claiming that a "hard case" is typical. The sufferings of this German doctor in a so-called democratic country are so terrible, he implies, as to wipe out every shred of moral justification for the struggle against Fascism. One must, however, keep a sense of proportion. Before raising a squeal because two thousand internees have only eighteen latrine buckets between them, one might as well remember what has happened these last few years in Poland, in Spain, in Czechoslovakia, etc., etc. If one clings too closely to the "those who fight against Fascism become Fascist themselves" formula, one is simply led into falsification. It is not true, for instance, as Mr. Comfort implies, that there is widespread spy-mania and that the prejudice against foreigners increases as the war gathers in momentum. The feeling against foreigners, which was one of the factors that made the internment of the refugees possible, has greatly died away, and Germans and Italians are now allowed into jobs that they would have been debarred from in peace time. It is not true, as he explicitly says, that the only difference between political persecution in England and in Germany is that in England nobody hears about it. Nor is it true that all the evil in our life is traceable to war or war-preparation. "I knew", he says, "that the English people, like the Germans, had never been happy since they put their trust in rearmament". Were they so conspicuously happy before? Is it not the truth, on the contrary, that rearmament, by reducing unemployment, made the English people somewhat happier, if anything? From my own observation I should say that, by and large, the war itself has made England happier; and this is not an argument in favour of war, but simply tells one something about the nature of so-called peace.

The fact is that the ordinary short-term case for pacifism, the claim that you can best frustrate the Nazis by not resisting them, cannot be sustained. If you don't resist the Nazis you are helping them, and ought to admit it. For then the long-term case for pacifism can be made out. You can say: "Yes, I know I am helping Hitler, and I want to help him. Let him conquer Britain, the U.S.S.R. and America. Let the Nazis rule the world; in the end they will grow into something different". That is at any rate a tenable position. It looks forward into human history, beyond the term of our own lives. What is not tenable is the idea that everything in the garden would be lovely *now* if only we stopped the wicked fighting, and that to fight back is exactly what the Nazis want us to do. Which does Hitler fear more, the P.P.U. or the R.A.F.? Which has he made greater efforts to sabotage? Is he trying to bring America into the war, or to keep America out of it? Would he be deeply distressed if the Russians stopped fighting tomorrow? And after all, the history of the last ten years suggests that Hitler has a pretty shrewd idea of his own interests.

The notion that you can somehow defeat violence by submitting to it is simply a flight from fact. As I have said, it is only possible to people who have money and guns between themselves and reality. But why should they want to make this flight, in any case? Because, rightly hating violence, they do not wish to recognise that it is integral to modern society and that their own fine feelings and noble attitudes are all the fruit of injustice backed up by force. They do not want to learn where their incomes come from. Underneath this lies the hard fact, so difficult for many people to face, that individual salvation is not possible, that the choice before human beings

is not, as a rule, between good and evil but between two evils. You can let the Nazis rule the world; that is evil; or you can overthrow them by war, which is also evil. There is no other choice before you, and whichever you choose you will not come out with clean hands. It seems to me that the text for our time is not "Woe to him through whom the evil cometh" but the one from which I took the title of this article, "There is not one that is righteous, no, not one". We have all touched pitch, we are all perishing by the sword. We do not have the chance, in a time like this, to say "Tomorrow we can all start being good". That is moonshine. We only have the chance of choosing the lesser evil and of working for the establishment of a new kind of society in which common decency will again be possible. There is no such thing as neutrality in this war. The whole population of the world is involved in it, from the Esquimos to the Andamanese, and since one must inevitably help one side or the other, it is better to know what one is doing and count the cost. Men like Darlan and Laval have at any rate had the courage to make their choice and proclaim it openly. The New Order, they say, must be established at all costs, and "il faut écrabouiller l'Angleterre". Mr. Murry appears, at any rate at moments, to think likewise. The Nazis, he says, are "doing the dirty work of the Lord" (they certainly did an exceptionally dirty job when they attacked Russia), and we must be careful "lest in fighting against Hitler we are fighting against God". Those are not pacifist sentiments, since if carried to their logical conclusion they involve not only surrendering to Hitler but helping him in his various forthcoming wars, but they are at least straightforward and courageous. I do not myself see Hitler as the saviour, even the unconscious saviour, of humanity, but there is a strong case

for thinking him so, far stronger than most people in England imagine. What there is no case for is to denounce Hitler and at the same time look down your nose at the people who actually keep you out of his clutches. That is simply a highbrow variant of British hypocrisy, a product of capitalism in decay, and the sort of thing for which Europeans, who at any rate understand the nature of a policeman and a dividend, justifiably despise us.

(George Orwell writes cogently and well against a kind of pacifism that was once prevalent but has almost ceased to exist. It has been swept out of the P.P.U. by keeping up with the dour reality. The number of former pacifist stalwarts who have dropped out is legion. There remain only those who (1) believe it as a matter of religious faith that we should "resist not evil" or (2) hold it as demonstrable to the imagination that Hitlerism is "the scourge of the Lord"—the destructive dynamic of this rotten civilisation: or they hold both together. To label them simply as "helping Hitler" is a simplification to which George Orwell, of all people, should not lend himself, because he must know to what sinister uses such a label can be put. We pacifists claim that we are striving, against tremendous odds, to prepare the only kind of resistance that can ultimately prevail against Hitlerism. We do not look down our noses at the honest men who fight. They are the vanguard, but we—preposterous as it may sound—are the last reserves. We "know what we fight for and love what we know" as surely, and I believe more surely, than George Orwell of the Home Guard does. Anyway, when it comes, as it will, to the last ditch we shall be found in it together; and the streamlined men on the other side will not be all Germans.)

EDITOR.

Creators and Crusaders

BRUCE BAIN

The opponents in a recent discussion on the English short story agreed on one important point only. H. E. Bates, George Orwell, and others declare unanimously that the stories of Katherine Mansfield "date," that they do not "wear well". Mr. Orwell sympathises with her misfortune to live in "the week-ending period of literature," which caused her preoccupation, according to him, with "the tiny misfortunes of over-sensitised people". These critics are talking through their hats. Katherine Mansfield's work is among the most significant of our time. That is my opinion, just as it is apparently Mr. Orwell's that she would have been better employed in clinical studies. I cannot disprove Mr. Orwell's opinions. But I can disprove facile assertions about her attitude to society.

Katherine Mansfield was a creator, not a crusader. As such she felt it her duty to stand aside from the struggle, and fulfil her part of the scheme by the resolution "to act and not to dream. To write it down at all times and at all costs". And what she wrote was not about over-sensitised people. The "tiny misfortunes" of which Mr. Orwell complains were the reflection of her hatred of the essential corruption of the world, which was composed of people, who, over-sensitised or under-sensitised, were all too alike in their appalling stupidity and shabbiness. She described her own work as "a cry against corruption", but she did not believe that this corruption was the result of a particular plutocratic system. It was the core of evil in man. She thought on a different plane from that of Mr. Orwell: she was not a publicist nor a politician, but a creator. She took the religious attitude to life.

"I know . . . I am not a crusader," she wrote, "and it's my job

to dwell apart and write my best for those that come after". That remained her creed, except for the resolution to dwell apart. She found later—too late—that the best way to write for those that came after was to live in the struggle, among the corruption. Isolation was artistic death. The problem of distance, however, was the only one on which Katherine changed her mind. It was her duty as a creator to come to closer grips with "warm, eager, living life".

But she was no crusader. Mr. Orwell is a very successful and intelligent crusader: it is presumptuous to expect, as do so many of his kin, that all creative writers shall think exclusively in political terms. It is right to demand that a writer should not be insensitive to the world he lives in: he obviously regards Katherine Mansfield as an escapist. But are these the sentiments of an inhabitant of a "rose-grown cottage", into which "the outer world had not butted its way"? In 1918, Katherine Mansfield wrote, "the novel just can't leave the war out. There *must* have been a change of heart. It is really fearful to see the settling down of human beings. I feel in the *profoundest* sense that nothing can ever be the same—that, as artists, we are traitors if we feel otherwise: we have to take into account and find new expressions, new moulds for our new thought and feelings." Mr. Orwell should not jib at—"the artist who denies his time, who turns away from it even so much as the fraction of a hair is false". Katherine Mansfield knew the reality of life: the outer world had butted its way in only too well, and butted her out just as she was on the verge of her greatest achievements. Having suffered so much poverty and illness, she could not fail to have a horizon peopled by

larger thoughts than those of the tiny misfortunes of over-sensitised people. But the great gulf between her mind and Mr. Orwell's is that she did not see her economic misfortunes as the result of an antiquated system ready for the scrap-heap. Her suffering she accepted—"suffering must become Love . . . I must pass from personal love to greater love".

This was no easy prescription: she lived what she wrote; for "it's only by being true to life that I can be true to art". Her task was to achieve this greater love by overcoming her sense of isolation from the community, her repulsion from the ugliness and corruption of urban civilisation, and living a fully integrated life. It was not without effort that she could force herself to forsake Cornwall and Brittany, and plunge into the evil urban life of London, but it was her intention. In any estimate of her work, one must remember that Katherine Mansfield's really important work had not yet begun. She was coming to the stage of self-mastery when she died, and the stories that would have transcribed her new experience remained unwritten. "I'm sick of people dying who promise well. One doesn't want to join that crowd at all". Unfortunately, one did.

What drove her on was the belief in the function of the artist, not as "an engineer of the soul", but a searcher for truth, the truth not of this or that party line, but the realities independent of economic technique. She disliked those writers who "pretend to know all there is in the parcel"; to-day we are infested with such among the ranks of the Faithful Marxists. There is nothing there about the artist as saviour, but to Katherine Mansfield the role of the artist in society was exactly that. "I believe the only way to *live* as artists under these new conditions in art and life is to put everything to the test for ourselves. We've got to win through

by ourselves . . . not only to face things, but really to find out of what they are composed . . . I think if artists were really thorough and honest they would save the world". She felt keenly that she was not helping to save the world with her stories as they were—"I am not crystal clear. There is so much to do, and I do so little", was her self-accusation. "I want much more material; I am tired of my little stories like birds bred in cages".

So she prepared herself for a new stage in her life. She felt the urgent necessity to live more fully and single-mindedly before she wrote another story. "I do not want to write any more stories until I am a less terribly poor human being. It seems to me that in life as it is lived to-day, the catastrophe is *imminent*; I feel this catastrophe in me. I want to be prepared for it, at least . . . What is important is to try and learn to live—really live—and in relation to everything—not isolated (this isolation is death to me)".

That was her faith, the faith of a creator, not of a crusader. And her problems have a real significance for us to-day. Creator and crusader stand opposed: to postpone the creation till after the crusading is death to the creator; to maintain that society itself can be the work of art is a gallant phrase, but such a creation is too far distant to be worth the sacrifice. It is the antagonism between the principles of action and contemplation, which, in our present condition, remain unreconcilable. Whatever the choice of our younger artists—and there is every indication of an abated crusading zeal, and a return to even such an extreme form of contemplation as Yoga—the catastrophe that Katherine Mansfield felt imminent is upon us. Some of us are strengthened by her work and her integrity, for, lacking an axe to grind or a problem to set, she transcribed a world of corruption into an unforgettable beauty.

War for ever, what?

JACK COMMON

The one thing that nobody likes to realise about this war is that it is not temporary. We assume that we are in a crisis with a term to it. We don't know what the term is precisely, whether it is to be more or less than the four years of the First Great War, but when we pass huge cycles of planning without much deliberation, the understanding is that they are all strictly *pro tem*, Emergency Powers Acts, and not the ribs and femurs of a new community. One day peace will be declared. We shall then discard that truss, like the fellow in the advert., and relax into some indefinite freedom. Meantime we put up with all the sacrifices and controls put upon us, we register and re-register, we work and drill, believing one and all that tomorrow is another day.

It isn't. Peace will never be declared until it is so well and truly made that it is a natural working condition the world over. Otherwise there can be cessations of course, local freezings and anæsthesias, like those in operation at the moment in Britain, Spain, and France; or there may be periods of general inertia on all fronts such as that of the early winter of 1939. It is even possible that another Versailles phase may set in, if the German military machine cracks, in which Anglo-America, Russia and Japan sit down to a game of diplomatic tip-it with the ghosts of the 'freed' nations. Periods of quiet, however, do not substantially alter the structure of communal life which is everywhere organised for war. War for what? Surely these vast preparations will culminate in some terrific campaign, an issue will be fought and decided, and afterwards there must be peace?

The temptation to think so comes because we remember best those

wars which had the dramatic quality of a decision. The Peloponnesian and Punic Wars, the defeat of the Spanish Armada, Waterloo, Pultowa, the American War of Independence—these are vivid because they are what we expect wars to be. Those that weren't, get swept into a miscellaneous category and largely forgotten. Nobody thrills over the details of the Sassanid-Byzantium struggles; Attila and Gengis Khan are the names of plagues; Burgundian battles and Ostrogothic raids just signs of a time. Plenty of wars have no more importance, or just the same importance, as disease: they are malignant dramatisations of certain stresses in the body politic. They went on constant as colds in the Greek city-states, in Melanesia, in feudal Europe; they rose to fever height time and again in the Persian and Chinese Empires; they came and went like plagues in Northern Europe after the fall of Rome, in the Near East during the Mongolian visitations. On the whole these are the typical wars, the ones we don't care to remember much. Our present 'go' has something of their character—but not only that.

It has been platitudinously obvious for half a century now that a new world is being created. Its apprehension gives rise to a great number of faiths and fears, to niggling adjustments and clean sweeps of the old machinery of government. Nobody knows quite how they are going to stand. The general position is parabled most neatly in the condition of India. Here the controlling Imperialist group is excessively class-conscious and unusually class-cohesive because it shares the same skin-colour and is recruited from abroad. It is faced with the necessity of making a new India, the same necessity which writhes in every other state. Yet any step they take in that direction may result in a

loss of their control, either to Indian rulers, to Indian revolutionary bodies, or to other Imperialist groups. Naturally they want a New India in which they still have a place. The Indians themselves are similarly handicapped in their efforts at new world building—to whom will the control go? There is one way in which sweeping changes can be made while retaining full control of a nation and that is by declaring a state of war. War silences all the prophets and leaders for next week; it tires out the people with excessive work; it irons their energies flat under military drill and discipline; like many games it harnesses a great deal of energy to a token goal. Amidst the obediences of a people at war, it is possible to try out any number of schemes without ever seriously upsetting the power of the various classes. The mandate for these changes could hardly be acquired save by revolution or for war. Yet the object of them is such a peace as the world has never before known.

That is why we cannot expect a brief conflict lasting three or four years and then relaxation. There is literally nothing to relax into. There wasn't anything at the end of 1918 really, but then we thought there was. This second great war is going to make quite plain to us that the cessation of hostilities is not peace. We are going to acquire a palate for peace as well as an appetite for it so that we shall not be fobbed off a second time with the poison of an armistice. Let's make up our minds to it; for a hundred years maybe, the plans of peace will be hewn out of the disciplined structures of war-taut states. We shall have first an over-elaboration of discipline and organisation. You have already seen in Britain how government plans roll up one after another like thunderstorms in June until there may be several in the sky at once, and some go rum-

bling away to Whitehall or Bristol, and some keep with us for months or years. Plans for production shower bonuses into the factory-worker's pay-pocket; plans for saving or budgeting take it out again. Grow-your-own-food subsidies boost farming profits; rationing smashes the small shopkeeper. Military requirements snatch up thousands of young miners, and registration herds the old ones back to the pits. Conscription of women for the factories imposes childlessness on many families, but the family allowance when it comes subsidises baby-farming. Excess Profits Tax promises to level off incomes, but bank deposits have just reached an all time "high" of just under £3,000,000,000, and reserve funds are nobody's business. The plans rave in cycles round every arc of public and private life and if you could follow them all home you'd only come to the conclusion that "man's planlessness to plans makes countless thousands turn", as Robbie Burns nearly said.

That is the first phase, and just now it reflects the amateurishness of the British planster. (To say nothing of the necessity he has of finding all his cousins good jobs). In the end it will achieve something like efficiency and then begin to pass off. A great deal of it anyway is due to the need for pretending to be still operating a system of private trading in commodities and labour, and to keep up the excitement of war. Some of the plans—rationing for instance—are essential, and will be made to work; others, income tax notably, are just pretence. Money and trade are already losing reality. In the factories they are already beginning to distribute tea, sugar, cigarettes and even boxes of kippers! This last must have been an inspiration of the penultimate planster, an Admiral's seventh cousin twice removed. It would actually be a convenience if everyone's rations were

delivered to them on production of a time-card showing work done, and wages dwindled to the all-important bonus which continues to flatter the free man behind the worker. Even that might be in kind—a couple of kippers, fifty Gold Flake, or a pint of old ale—according to how strenuous, or well in with the foreman, the fellow was. Once you get used to a plan, always supposing it is a reasonably good one, it does not appear as restriction. Quite a number of those we are now sampling will become automatic and hardly thought about in the course of the next decade.

Others are highly dangerous. Far and away the greatest onslaught Britain has made during the present war is the attack on labour begun last winter under the excuse that America would not help us unless we became less 'socialistic'. As a result of it, the worker may be penalised for 'indiscipline' either by being sent to the army if he is young enough (only boss's pets are exempt, says the Act), or in some manner not defined. He may be transferred to another district, and not permitted to take his wife with him. He may be replaced by a woman, if he is a factory-worker, by an Italian prisoner if he works on the land. Yet he cannot leave his job, he cannot strike, he cannot stay away from work or refuse overtime when his position under the income tax swindle is such that he would be working for nothing. This present position gives the employer such power as he has not enjoyed since the rise of the trades union movement. And it is likely to get worse. The most typical young couple to-day is one in which the man is wiped up for the army as soon as he is old enough; on one leave or another he gets married; his pay is too little for a woman to have children on it; so she goes into the factory. They have had a brief introduction into the rhythm of married life, and then it is

broken. The number of these broken lives is being enormously multiplied. So many men now are not responsible for their women, not doing anything for them; so many women are not responsible for children; so many children, what with that and evacuation, are not responsible to parents. It is a generation of loose ends who have no private rights and no private bonds, and who have, many of them, been influenced by the unexampled sadism of modern war. We shall experience a terrible come-back from this careless creation. In the end, we'll find that never was cheap labour so dearly bought. The juvenile criminals of to-day will be weaponed men tomorrow; those torn-away troops toughened and denied the geniality of beer will be time-expired men come back to childless homes; and the middle-age of the women of ruptured marriages is awful to contemplate. Here is the greatest lack of peace, both now and for the future. No plan covers it.

The reason probably is that what is needed is a definite piece of communal or communist creation. Someone must turn this negative loose-endedness into a positive freedom, and that someone is the loose-ends themselves. The refounding of the family, all afresh—not Humpty-Dumpty-wise—is the keystone pinning of the new peace. You may have to overturn the censorship, raid the reserve funds and demobilise the A.T.S. to do it, but once done, wherever it is done, militarism will dissipate against it. Man only wants a new way to live, and he'll stop dying like a fool among the impedimenta of his last toys.

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THE ADELPHI CENTRE, OCTOBER, 1939-41

There is no such thing as progress at Langham. Only those who know something of the infinite nature of mankind are free from the kind of expectation which has the world in its grip. We can say that the land is producing in abundance, the people working, and innumerable activities are under way. But so far as real accomplishment is concerned, the thing we are aiming at is not capable of analysis. All we do know is that people are undergoing the process of becoming. What they become is their own private responsibility. What Langham aims at is something no one can define. Rather is it an intangible thing, an act of faith, and we only sense the essence of it. We can never prove it by accounting and balance sheets. This is not to say that we don't aim at self-subsistence. We do. But as it is possible to be economically self-subsisting in capitalist society there is no special virtue in that alone. Economic security has brought forth moral collapse. Few things tend to bring deadly inertia to mankind more than security. To understand hunger one must have been unhungred. To bring peace people have got to experience the nature of peace. The creation of peace in man's heart is the task of the Langham community.

All we can claim for Langham is that its people have not laid down arms in the struggle for a peaceful existence. The dead must always bury the dead. To bring into being new forms, new patterns, in which one can create and beget manifestations of life, in full strength, tenderness, generosity and compassion, demands of man all that he has. The people who are the stuff of this place have already renounced the benefits of society, but that is just elementary. What we

hope they will acquire is a new grace, a grace big enough to have a care for children, tolerance for the aged, thought for the perplexed, and a capacity for imparting the same dignity towards the growing of a carrot as one needs to write a sonnet. The common relatedness in all human activity, the breaking up of which has destroyed peace and driven us into places of refuge, is the urgent requirement of the times. A place is here wherein it is possible to have the will compel what the heart desires. What we seek to learn is the real desire of the heart. Only by a religious inspiration can the heart be purified of its dross. Purgation is impossible in a select party. Langham is not select, but bears within itself fragments of humanity who have not yet found a place in the sun. One's hope is that a sun will shine from here and illuminate the dark places of the earth. We cannot explain the Centre. We do ask people to visit us to see and help us in the work. We know that a community is a precarious affair, needing all the trust and faith it can get. We do what we can.

J. H. WATSON (WARDEN).

REVIEWS

Challenge to the Church

John Macmurray. *Kegan Paul, 1s.*

What is the fundamental principle, as distinct from the organisation, of democracy? asks John Macmurray. He finds it in the limitation of political authority. Traditional democracy was based on excluding both religious and economic life from the sphere of

political authority. But now the exclusion of economic life from the authority of government is no longer possible. Thus the traditional democratic check on political authority—the power to “refuse supply”—disappears: the remaining check—that of religion—has dwindled to a care for individual salvation. The problem is to revivify religion so that it becomes an effective check on totalitarian socialism, which (whether it calls itself national or international) is inevitable.

Macmurray, indeed, faintly suggests that this revived religion may be the means of avoiding totalitarian socialism and creating “the international democratic order which we must have if we are to keep democracy at all.” It is not clear what, precisely, is meant by this “international democratic order”; but it would appear to be a European federation of socialist democracies. Then we must ask: What is a socialist democracy?

We have seen that what is needed to make democracy possible is an inner bond of sentiment which can sustain and limit the external bond of law backed by force. Where the people are united by a feeling of brotherhood or a sense of comradeship, a democratic polity is possible. When this is absent, democracy is impossible, however much it may be desired.

This feeling of brotherhood is what Macmurray means by religion. But it must be a feeling of universal brotherhood. He allows that the feeling of brotherhood, even when it is exclusive, as in Judaism or Nazism, is a religious feeling: but the sentiment of the exclusive community he calls conservative religion, while that of the inclusive, universal community is creative religion. Therefore, the “international democratic order” for which he yearns would appear to be a federation of socialist societies each animated by a sentiment of universal brotherhood. Why does not a federation of Soviet Republics

fill the bill? Is it because in the U.S.S.R. political authority does not leave the sphere of religion outside its competence? Macmurray does not explicitly say that: he writes:

Russia is not effectively democratic, even though, as I believe, it still remains democratic in intention. It has achieved socialism and a near approach to social and economic equality. It has created the organisation of a democratic polity, but it has not solved the practical problem of democracy, the control of government by the people. The activities of government are not determined by the will of the Russian people. On the contrary the activities of the people are determined by the will of the government.

How, then, is the practical problem to be solved—in Russia? Presumably, the answer is by the growth of the sentiment of brotherhood which is creative religion. But this is disturbingly vague. Trying to translate it into social realities it seems to mean: by the creation of voluntary groups, united by the sentiment of brotherhood and consequently by a religious bond, which will have the strength to resist the authority of the totalitarian state. This (we admit) is a very bold gloss on Macmurray's text.

Actually, we fear, he argues in a circle. Religion alone can save us from totalitarianism; but it must be creative, not conservative, Christianity. The mark of creative religion is that it is this-worldly. It must look to the creation of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. If it seeks an other-worldly kingdom it necessarily becomes socially conservative. Thus, it must be at once universal and this-worldly in its sentiment of brotherhood. But is it not precisely this universal and this-worldly sentiment of brotherhood which has produced Russian totalitarian Communism? How, then, can it produce the corrective to totalitarian Communism? Macmurray gives no answer, unless one

is to be found in the final sentence of the following paragraph:

The democratic unification of Europe depends upon the existence of a sentiment of European community. If there is to be popular government, there must be a people unified by the consciousness that they belong together. Is there such a European people? If there is not, then the solution of the post-war problem cannot be a democratic one. The clash of conflicting sentiments of nationality and class will face a totalitarian solution, and democracy will only emerge where new and larger loyalties have had time to grow, to find their symbolic and ritual expression and to provide the inner unity which can limit and subordinate political authority.

Can Christianity, which is the foundation of what vestiges remain of a common European sentiment, transform itself into the creative religion of universal, this-worldly brotherhood? Suppose it can. Then we must ask in what specific way would this creative religion of Christianity be different in behaviour from the universal, this-worldly brotherhood which is expressed in Russian Communism? The only differentiation we can conceive is that it should abjure the use of violence. But Macmurray does not say this, nor does he even hint at it. He maintains, realistically enough, that fear is the basis of politics and love the basis of religion: therefore, politics must always be subordinate to religion. But how to subordinate politics to religion (in this sense) he leaves undetermined.

Since—to use Macmurray's terms—it is the failure of the bond of religion within the international society, and consequently within the national society, and its supersession by the compulsion of fear, which is the cause of the present anarchy of war, it is hard to understand how Macmurray can cherish even a faint hope that "the international democratic order" will emerge out of the war-anarchy for the "international democratic

order" is avowedly based on the predominance of love over fear both in the national and the international societies. That profound transformation can take place, it seems to me, only after great tribulation. There will be a period of totalitarianism during which the only possible resistance of religion to politics, or of love to fear, will be as it was at the beginning of the Christian era, through the peaceful resistance of voluntary and religious brotherhoods.

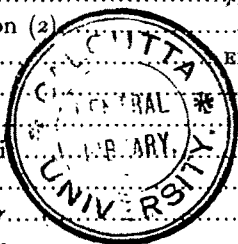
Macmurray (I think) lets us down. His thinking at the crucial point falls into the pit of abstraction; it excludes the actual process of war-anarchy and war-totalitarianism in which we are involved. When that is over, he appears to say, the quest for the new revolutionary Christianity can begin. But there can be no such convenient suspension of the process of history. The vestiges of universal Christianity are being destroyed every hour. No doubt, more obscurely and on a far smaller scale, universal Christianity is being reborn every hour. It is on these actual processes of rebirth through travail that our hopes must be set. And though I would not for one moment maintain that the rebirth of the religious bond of brotherhood is confined to those who consciously repudiate the war, it is quite clear to me that these have a crucial part to play. By ignoring the actual process of war, which is confessedly the culmination and condemnation of the decay of religion (in his own sense), by refusing to ask how the rebirth of religion can and ought to manifest itself here and now, Macmurray leaves us in the clouds.

JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY.

THE ADELPHI

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After the Panzer

JACK COMMON

One of the things which this war puts in italics is the growing irrelevance of personal choice. "They'll have you, mate, when they want you," is the usual workshop soother to young fellows worrying about their future. But what they'll have you for is left to them, supposing they know. You don't know what they are up to, that is a fact, and in consequence it is hard to know what you are up to yourself. Thus if you wanted to fight the Nazis the obvious course was to join the army. You then shot your little bolt of will and the door shut on you. Very likely you've been ever since in a state of involuntary pacifism quite as fixed as the real article, for as the army is not a democratic institution it cannot fight on the motion being put and carried, only when "they" say so. All that your choice registered, then, was surrender, the acceptance of passivity. It was like

a vote made at the last election which the new government interprets as support for any design in hand.

If you didn't want to fight the Nazis, there was no such clear line of refusal. You could register as a conscientious objector providing you had some pull with representatives of the old religion; you could work on the land, if you had the skill, the money to buy some, or relatives owning it; and you could go to gaol, providing there weren't too many of you all going at once. Degrees of passivity again. No doubt it can pile up as inertia, or as impetus, according to which direction it moves, but it can never have the swift effect of continuously proclaimed conviction. The politico-economic structure which canopies all the peoples is like a climate upon them, something to which they adapt, that is, as though it could only be suffered. That climate blows cold on the eccentric. It likes the ordered ranks, the regular ring of heels, and its frost comes quick to the toe not touching the line.

Keep in step, behave alike, and it doesn't matter what you think or believe. We all feel this pressure to be uniform and so we become passive supporters, passive resisters of any policy that "breaks" headlines. And there's not a pin to choose between the lot of us.

Because the situation is new, in its immensity that is, nobody is very well able to size it up. There is not yet an effective demand for such an assessment. The prevailing consciousness is wholly taken up with the problem of securing a coagulation into obedience among each of the great populations concerned in the present series of wars. Even when the end is reached and one central authority holds its Atlantic Charter, its New Order, or its Communist Manifesto over the whole globe, the interest for a time must still be organisational, not interpretative. No good cause can stand bombing, ultimately. Therefore the pre-condition for any gesture of the general creative impulse is the establishment of law and order. The peoples impinge too much upon one another to-day for there to be any easy go-as-you-please among them. The skies and sea-ways are perilous in anarchy and weapons are too costly to be of private use. There cannot be a peace of non-interference in which all former combatants relapse into the quietude of their own economic sphere until such time as ambition or greed moves them to another foray; the modern world lacks the distance for that. It must be an ordered peace, and paradoxically we all acquiesce in an ordered war in order to get it.

Worth remembering sometimes that that is the reason for passive behaviour and the mandate expressed thereby, lest the planners think they have achieved this vast effect out of their own little schemes; or the thugs put it all down to the fascination of war.

Already the imposition of order by Germans runs into trouble because people don't find it just, and the imposition of order by Britain gets clouded by sarcasm because people don't feel it is sincere. The suppression of the private individual, even with his consent, does not abolish public opinion; it collectivises unspoken thought and builds a hinterland of dark experience from which may come lightnings, anarchies, or dreams. This is the natural counter to an over-conscious regulation of the public life. Again and again at the peak periods of the several civilisations we have known, intellectuals count the coins of existing consciousness and say that the sum is this or that, hopefully; the ruling caste of the time reduces the answer by half, realistically, and thus arrives at the practicable total; and always, finally, the thing to be lived, the invisibly accreted vital core of communal being is both less and more than what was forecast or codified. There is so much difference between the idea thought and the idea lived. On paper the scheme for a world everywhere subordinated to a central authority, whether constituted in a so-called "Herrenvolk," a Comintern, or a supreme parliament of Anglo-American democrats, seems safe enough, even tame — especially when backed by a picked army having a monopoly of all terrific modern weapons. There'd be a plan for everything, and everything in its plan. If any group didn't like its particular plan, they get bombed off—that's the end of them. The searchlight of a huge publicity service is constantly illuminating all private lives; there are statistics covering every activity; and where all is known all can be arranged for—thus the modern all-electric world-state. Plenty of people think they could live in that—at the top, where the consciousness plays. How it may, work out for the

pooled masses now forced to overlive the plain fact of their community, is an impossible guess for the brightest of us.

Keep it in mind, though. These are great times most scurvily represented. The destructiveness of their hundred-mile deep, thousand-mile ranging battles, the curious apathy of their automatic crusades, tends to a constant writing-down of them. We are so engaged in the tension of living against such destruction that we do not yet know what life it is we are shaping. Imagination seems paralysed, consciousness irrelevant, nearly all talk or writing beside the point. It is a withdrawal of the nerve-endings and yet, no ending to apprehension. Probably the majority of folk have far more sense of what is happening in the world now than ever they had in the days when so many societies pelted them with pamphlets. What is happening, happens in them. Perhaps their passivity masks it, from themselves too. This is what

we'd expect by analogy with other forms of creation which are also inexplicable until afterwards, and usually impose a certain passivity and carelessness upon the subject of them. Nevertheless, he knows very well that he's coming to something. Now we never knew that we'd go into the new era prodded by panzers and blasted by bombs—you can bet that the present panzer-masters are equally out in their expectations of the sort of New Era citizen they think to lord it over. He'll be the kiddy all right, the fellow who's digested the bombs, demobilised his family and demolished his career, all passively, mark you. Only give him law and order, that's all he asks. Ten to one when he gets it there'll be a mighty rush to find writers and artists, doctors and scientists and philosophers, any of the great explaining tribe to elucidate this new citizen to the unfortunate World Authority that's got to run him. But even then it won't be easy.

THEY NAME THEE

They name thee, Syrian mystic,
Child of a virgin's womb.
They tell thy resurrection,
They show the empty tomb.

Two things are known to sinners,
—Why waste they then their
breath?—

The way of generation,
The certainty of death.

Against thee, Syrian mystic,
The scale falls heavily;
A life with God? Forsaken?
The cross on Calvary.

A universe loose-jointed
Leaves holes in wisdom's net.
And up life's little river
The tide of God may set.

However wise man's sowing,
Amid the shocks of corn,
Despised, rejected, bruised,
The poppy lies forlorn.

Only the country children
Delight that weed to see.
"Suffer the little children,"
Sayest thou, "to come to
Me"?

Love was a marsh-light fickle,
A torment on the earth.
What if from thy conception
A new love came to birth?

If in our love's confusion
Thou art love's certainty,
Suffer us little children,
O Christ, to come to thee.

I.F.G.

Carlyle and the French Revolution (2)

F. A. LEA

The Russian poet Tiutchev said of Napoleon that he carried the French Revolution within himself. The same is true of Carlyle. Carlyle was conscious in his own nature of all the passions that had gone to make up the phases of the Revolution. He knew from experience both the blind rebellion and antithetical rationalism of the Jacobins; he knew also the imagination that could comprehend and overcome them. *The French Revolution* is a product of this imagination, as the *Code Napoleon* had been. Both are manifestations of "post-revolutionary activity."*

Carlyle's victory over the Jacobin in himself was not, however, final—any more than Napoleon's had been. Just as battle and ambition betrayed Napoleon at the last, so, in Carlyle, the insurrectionary fervour of the rebel wages a constant guerilla warfare with the controlling imagination. It bursts forth in odd places in his work; in his dithyrambs to Cromwell, for example, upon the massacres in Ireland. And again and again, in *The French Revolution*, we hear this volcanic voice of instinct challenging the supremacy of imagination—"where Force is not yet distinguished into Bidden and Forbidden, but Crime and Virtue welter unseparated,—in that domain of what is called the Passions."

It reminds us of Milton's uncon-

scious identification with Satan; still more of Shelley's sympathy with the rebellious Titan of the *Prometheus Solutus*, whom he compared to Satan, and whom he resurrected, as Blake did the hero of *Paradise Lost*, in order that he should repent of his rebellion, forgive the God of Reason, and be reborn in the imagination. That rebirth is implicit in *The French Revolution*, as it is in *Prometheus Unbound*—but it is also precarious. So precarious that many a reader, from Wordsworth onwards, has gone away with the impression that the author was "of the Devil's party"—an advocate of insurrection—notwithstanding that the whole moral of his work is directed against it. For *The French Revolution* has a moral. It is stated at the end: "That there be no second Sansculottism in our Earth for a thousand years, let us understand well what the first was; and let Rich and Poor of us go and do otherwise."

It is not for nothing that Carlyle is charged with proclaiming Might as Right, although his real contention was that Right is Might. Nevertheless, his instinctive sympathy with the destructive forces of the Revolution was as much a strength as a weakness, in him: since no man knows better the flimsiness of the barrier dividing humanity from bestiality than he who is conscious of it in himself. Carlyle was fearfully conscious of it. In *himself* was the origin of iconoclasm and Terror: he bore his part in the general guilt. Of all the Romantics he was the most deeply convinced of the reality of Original Sin. Humanity, in his eyes, was for ever playing on the brink of an abyss, into which it might at any moment be plunged—and the spectacle, terrified him. That

*To the same order he himself ascribed the work of those German Romantics with whom he felt so close an affinity; in whose passage beyond the *Sturm und Drang* phase of their own development he had, in fact, "found himself": "A French Revolution is one phenomenon; as complement and spiritual exponent thereof, a poet Goethe and German literature is to me another" (*Past and Present*).

premonition of impending disaster which is so characteristic of the great Victorians reaches a crescendo in Carlyle. His whole life was devoted to averting it.

The French Revolution was one effort directed to that end. *Past and Present* was another. *Past and Present* is an elaboration of the moral of *The French Revolution*. It is a strange, repetitive, phantasmagoric indictment of the Shams and Semblances of nineteenth century England: in which Formula and Reality had again parted company—the Formulæ of Progress and *Laissez-faire*; the Reality of "over-production" and a destitute army of unemployed. Remarkable indeed that Carlyle should, more than a hundred years ago, have seized on the phenomenon of mass-unemployment as the outward, most visible sign of the falsity of capitalist society, and the instrument by which that society would destroy itself!

For such a society, history had taught him, could not endure. Founded upon self-interest openly proclaimed, either it would be revolutionised consciously and peacefully, or it would revolutionise itself, unconsciously and catastrophically.

"Our England, our lot live as it is. It will self with God again, or with nameless throes consummation to the le had no patience with of "prosperity." Prosperity would be, with the of Corn Laws and the of commerce—but it despite only; a precious used for the peace- to end still in the revolution of society. present system of individualism and Government by *laissez-faire*, this Nation cannot live. And if, in the priceless interim, some new life and healing be not found, there is no second respite to be counted on."

But new life and healing depended upon the creation of a new Aristocracy; and that, in its turn, upon the general acceptance of a new morality, vitally different from the morality of capitalist democracy. A new Aristocracy, Carlyle said, would be "a real Priesthood." It would need to know that "Judgment for an evil thing is many times delayed some day or two, some century or two, but it is sure as life, it is sure as death! In the centre of the world-whirlwind, verily now as in the oldest days, dwells and speaks a God. The great soul of the world is just." It would need to know that only a just society can endure, and dedicate itself to the securing of justice. And not only would the Aristocracy have to adopt a morality other than self-interest; the people would have to do so also: otherwise such an Aristocracy would never get itself appointed. It needs a kind of heroism even to recognise the Hero.

Without this new morality, neither democratic nor any other forms of appointment would avail men anything. Carlyle's judgment on democracy as he knew it was severe. He recognised a new assertion of the validity of the individual, upon which there could be no going back; but ninety per cent. of it seemed to him a mere negation—of the false aristocracies that had preceded it. It meant "despair of finding any Heroes to govern you, and contented putting up with the want of them." Yet if the French Revolution had proved anything it was this: "That False Aristocracies are insupportable; that No-Aristocracies, Liberty-and-Equalities are impossible; that true Aristocracies are at once indispensable and not easily attained." To the individualistic anarchy of England he preferred the ordered despotism of Prussia. But what he really desired, most deeply of all, was something analogous to the "organic society" of the Middle

Ages, so wonderfully, and wistfully portrayed in *Past and Present*.

In the last resort, as he knew, that depended upon a re-birth of religion—and of this he had little enough hope. Between the individualistic Nonconformity of England and the hollow semblance of contemporary Catholicism he could make no choice. Both were incapable of saving society. And if society were not saved, it would inevitably be damned: there was no half-way house between Heaven and Hell. He passed his latter years in complete despair.

For Carlyle was more realistic than Marx; he never succumbed to Messianism. And it is utterly untrue to say that Marx's historical materialism has discredited or superseded the "Great Man theory of history." These do not contradict, but complement one another. More, as they are popularly understood, they are false without one another. Historical materialism is false, if it postulates creative revolution without creative revolutionaries; and the Great Man theory is false if it presupposes the Hero's independence of historical Fate. But Carlyle himself did not presuppose that. Indeed, he did not believe that convulsions could be avoided: history was never more than partially willed. At most they could be tempered, made creative as well as destructive, by the agency of a prophet bidding Repent!—

"Imminent perdition is not usually driven away by words of warning. Didactic Destiny has other methods in store; or these would fail always. Such words should, nevertheless, be uttered, when they dwell truly in the soul of any man. Words are hard, importunate; but how much harder the importunate events they foreshadow! Here and there a human soul may listen to the words—who knows how many human souls?—whereby the importunate events, if not diverted and prevented, will be rendered less hard."

It is only destructive revolution that is inevitable, and it is not inevitable at all. It can be pre-

vented, or mitigated—by creative revolution. Grasp the distinction, and many things become clear: not least the final incompatibility of Danton and Robespierre, Socialism and Communism, Pacifism, and super-national Nazism.

Unhappily, not many human souls did listen to Carlyle, preaching the necessity of an organic society in the hey-day of competitive capitalism; of "loving the best men best," when individualistic democracy was triumphant; of a re-birth of communal religion, to an audience of vigorous Nonconformists. Superficial honours were heaped upon him; his message was forgotten or derided. In so far as it had any influence, it was upon the Christian Socialism of Keir Hardie (*Sartor Resartus* was among Hardie's earliest reading)—and that failed. Re-born in the Christian Pacifism of Canon Sheppard, it failed again: and now "the unemployed nation of Europe" has taken history into its own hands. Mirabeau dead, Robespierre enjoys his brief supremacy; the Continent waits for its Napoleon. And yet, the proclamation of a new principle transcending self-interest, that re-birth of religion for which Carlyle longed, so remote as ever. "On the one is dreary Cant, with a re of things noble and divine; the other is but acrid Cando prophecy of things b fernal."

"His boding prophet nounces Mr. H. D. Traill in the introduction to a centenary edition of *Past and Present* lying beside me, "are marred for us to-day by an ever-present consciousness of their subsequent falsification."

"A God's-message," exclaims Carlyle himself, a few pages further on: "A God's-message never came to thicker-skinned people; never had a God's-message to pierce through thicker integuments, into heavier ears."

The Public Entertainer

ELIZABETH MYERS

The scene is a London Underground Station about ten o'clock on a winter's night. Citizens are either in the bowels of the earth or on the tops of the roofs—the first group waiting, the second watching.

Five miles or so above the planet some German people are cruising about in aeroplanes, looking like beautiful fluted doves when caught in the icy beams of the searchlight. But their intentions are not pentecostal, for every once in a while they release flights of finned cylinders which, on bursting, will cause buildings to topple and scientifically liquidate large numbers of citizens. By way of a change the projectiles may spew fire or a little gas.

The idea is to liven the scene as much as possible during the hours of darkness over a small island lying, at one point, just twenty-two miles from the main continent of Europe.

Meantime, deep down in an Underground Station those citizens who have got the habit of living half their lives on railway stairs and platforms, or who have no homes at all owing to the dispersal of the same by bombs, are busily involved in their new social hubbub which entails codes, complications, and penalties no less rigorous than in the merry-go-round of life above stairs.

To be sure there is discomfort below. Draughts roar down the subterranean passages or blasts of suffocating hot air. The trains make a constant commotion, and the passengers plunge among the shelterers on their determinate way to the lifts in a manner that is a strain on civilised feelings.

But the draughts blowing now hot now cold are no worse than the villainous London climate

above; privacy is a luxury not mourned by the poor who were accustomed to celebrating their pre-war life largely on the open street; metamorphosis from a slum room to a doss on a railway platform entails no remarkable hardship; while the zoological row of trains and passengers are blights to be found anywhere at any time.

And meanwhile, the lights shine brightly, a gigantic row of posters provides something of a heraldic splash, good humour prevails and, best of all, down there it is Safe.

The canvas is racy and huge. Bright young women, having some aura of milkmaids in their fresh green overalls, are dispensing tea and buns. The mousy little girl who, when prevailed upon to sing, revealed a voice like a bellowing bull, is now being passed from pneumatic bosom to bosom, skittish under her new title of the Nightingale of Bethnal Green.

Two gentlemen of the artisan order settle an imperative point of etiquette:—

"You goin' to take your flamin' feet out of my ears?"

"It'll be a pleasure"—very insolently.

A charwoman and the managing-director of a felt-factory are grumbling at one another over a tense game of Snakes and Ladders.

A fearful theme is being stated by a ukelele in the hands of an urchin ten years old.

An old man who is probably soft in the head, sits and snuffles:—

"But you can't see the stars! Stars is education! I studied 'em. When Mars is in the 8th House—that's the House of the Scorpion—it means death by fire, slaughter, and war, by God!"

A woman holds a small audience with an intriguing recipe for making Christmas pudding from potatoes: and an untidy young

man with a beaky learned look, who has improved his mind, if not his personal freshness, by a wedge of University Extension culture, is making a serious effort, in a shady corner, to persuade a pert little shop-assistant to consider him as a candidate for courtship.

"I can't," states the girl exasperatedly. "I've told you—I got a boy. Be here any minute."

"Huh! I've got a girl, if it comes to that. But—" very sincerely, "I'd rather have you."

"Well, I don't register a thing for you, see."

"Can't you try?"

"I can't register a thing. Hell, I don't like it down here with fresh nobs like you."

"Does Reg like it down here?" asks the young man.

The girl stares at him in amazement.

"How'd you know my boy's name is Reg?"

He, gleefully:—

"You have been telling me all the time. Don't register this, don't register that! You see," he says, proudly, "I've studied psycho-analysis!"

The girl backs away from him.

"Sounds like black magic to me!"

Suddenly all these private affairs enacted in the Government-provided bunks or on home-lugged bedding recede before a circumstance at the platform edge. A man, aged about thirty-eight, with a distraught blonde face, thin curly hair like wire shavings, and whose sartorial taste is good, informs the crowd that he is going to throw himself under the next train that comes in.

The people listen to this intention politely, phlegmatically.

The man, whirling his arms like a lop-sided windmill, tells them instructively:—

"Any man who wants to commit suicide should never do so in a way to shock or offend his relations! That's selfish, see, when a wife

comes home and finds her husband sitting with his head hanging off, or doused in the gas oven. I've always said if a person wants to commit suicide he should go and do it in Hyde Park—somewhere public, where it slips into the bigness of the scene. It's an outrage in a quiet respectable home. Not that I've got a home. I've got nobody. But it would upset my landlady. No," he repeats, heavily, "I've got nobody!"

"He ain't got nobody!" impressively says a working-man, whose wife and five sleeping children are grouped round him in attitudes of stupefying fidelity. "Ain't he lucky?" breathes the working-man with passionate envy.

"And I'm not selfish," continues the suicide, in his pride. "I'm not selfish, so—I'm ending it all here."

The crowd will agree that he is not selfish. His hallucinated views are providing them with an interesting scene.

Not that he is tapping their deeper emotions. Weeks of crashing bombs, roaring fires, and endless disaster have anæsthetized their finer feelings.

Staggering heroism comes a ha'penny a time: bestiality and murder are the rule not the exception of normal experience. Nerves jaded by the long-extended combination of the dotty and the divine cannot respond to the performance of this unknown man. His purposeful attitude provides them merely with some idle speculations, arouses no consternation.

"What's he waiting for, anyway?" demands an ex-boxer, a barrel-chested man in a check cap and dirty yellow overcoat. "Why don't he get on with it?"

A woman, dressed in three coats, so as not to get one bombed if left at home, answers the impatient one:—

"He's waiting for the train to come in, ain't he? Throw himself under the wheels, won't he? Give

them sodding passengers somethink else to look at! Damn' if I ain't tired of 'em staring at us!"

"Thass ri'," heartily concurs an old gentleman who has been surreptitiously gulping guinness under his moth-eaten blanket. "Give the bastards somethink else to look at!"

"Why shouldn't he wait for the train?", asks a supreme realist. "Better—then! They do say the voltage on the line is higher when the train approaches. Let him wait. I want him to wait."

He looks doggedly about him. From the disposition of the faces around it seems that everyone else wants the suicide to wait, as well.

A scraggy old woman in a flat raffish hat like a pancake, who, the previous month, has lost everything in an air-raid—home, husband, daughter, grandchildren—unimaginably killed before her eyes, says plaintively:—

"Beats me—him goin' to all this trouble! Kor! He only got to take a stroll up in the street an' he can be done for easy as easy. How comes he's waitin' for a train?"

In making this statement, the old woman has poked at the point which renders the suicide's intention a poor drained sort of an affair. In an everyday world where death is larger than life, this episode, this deliberate courting of death, seems ludicrous and unreal.

All this time, nobody has addressed a word to the suicide. Every comment is aimed at him. No one is disposed to take upon himself the responsibility of making a direct observation to him.

Besides, such a course would be superfluous in a case where a man has so implacably made up his own mind. Who are they to advise him or try to deviate him from his route? Where life is providing them with a pattern so complete in itself, interference from them would be impertinent.

Moreover, at a time when no one

can have his own way, there is something refreshing in the spectacle of a citizen whose hard wish seems to have every chance of fulfilment.

Children not already asleep are enthralled on some other platform. No diversion by officialdom is likely, either, inasmuch as on the platform whither the children have flitted, a person has gone off into a series of prodigious fits necessitating aid from whatever representatives of law and order are present below on this eventful evening.

But, by this time, it has thoroughly come to the suicide that the stern closed faces of the citizens indicate an unpardonable lack of sensitiveness to his dire purpose. He searches ardently for suitable stimulation.

"Want to know why I'm doing this?" he begins. "My God, I'll tell you—"

At this point commotion arrives to crumble his venture. A distant roar comes reverberating through the tunnels; a large poster advertising brassières wriggles rather cynically off the tunnel tiles, completely folding up the hotly-tinted young woman displaying the privy garment; and a short rain of plaster impairs the head-gear of the shelterers, some of whom make an offensive but unafrighted play on the name of God and the parents of the foreign airmen aloft.

Word comes down almost immediately that a heavy-calibre bomb has struck the station itself above them. Without any hesitation, the majority lunge stairward to render what aid they can.

Fortunately, not many citizens are caught in the débris. Everyone works with ferocity. The suicide is vehemently to the fore. Covered with dirt, perspiration and bleeding scratches, he successfully brings two porters from beneath the wreckage.

There are great rents in the ceil-

THE ADELPHI, DECEMBER, 1941.

ing. The old man who mourned for the stars points out the naked stellar spaces to a dazed little child:—

"Stars, see! Only Christ Almighty can interfere with *them*!"

As soon as the ARP squad, stiffened by a contingent of the Army, has taken full charge of the scene, the civilian helpers are banished below again. They are well pleased to depart, for a fresh batch of bombers can be heard fuming in the sky.

They troop downstairs to their places. Comment on the interlude is brief: these matters come boringly.

It is not long before the citizens' thoughts go back to what was occupying them before the explosion. Instinctively they look for the teetering doll at the platform edge.

And he—with mental awareness of their wants—he leaves off rubbing his wounded hands and trails with weary arrogance to the platform edge. He stands there, swaying.

"I'm not waiting for the train," he announces with angry sorrow. "I'm going over *now*." And he instantly takes a header on to the live-wire.

But, simultaneous with the uproar above stairs, it so happens that a land-mine, which has arrived close beside a distant electricity-supply unit, has temporarily caused a dislocation of the current. The line is dead.

The shelterers watch the suicide climb back on to the platform with a complacency so paralysing, its effect is as though he has actually received the full welt of the electric current.

On Loving One's Enemies

J. H. WATSON

Loving, whether of friends or enemies, is an affirmation. Unless we have something to affirm, in both giving and taking (which are the vital implications of love), we do violence. To love, one must be loved, for to love one must be lovable, and we are not lovable unless we are loved. We can no more will ourselves to be loved than we can will ourselves to love. Love is the spontaneous outpouring of the real self, without bounds or limit. It requires no motive power, either of pity or understanding, nor yet of sympathy; it is the creation and establishment of the divine spirit on earth. Love is neither an idea nor ideal, but is the fine excess Keats believed poetry to be.

There is little excess in the world to-day. Dull resentment rather than passionate anger, pity in the abstract rather than a full heart, and a dreadful fear, are the things we find. When we disagree with

a particular act of a nation we freeze its credit. The day of passionate protest is fled. So with men, a prevailing fear eats at the heart and the remnant of generosity which still lies latent and potential is frozen, not because we wish it frozen, nor yet would not have it thawed, but because we have nothing to thaw it with. The will to be generous and to love may be there, but without the qualities needed to be generous with, our acts become pernicious. Loving, like living, cannot be taught; but it can be denied. "You must be hard. You cannot afford to be generous." That is the kind of thing one meets with from even the most ardent man. Who on earth wants to afford generosity? If you *are* generous you afford it, naturally. Once worldly wisdom comes in we are defeated. Loving is unwise, ridiculous, foolish, when measured by material standards. Even taking is suspect of lust by worldly standards. But there must be great generosity and love, and

an immense amount of courage, before one can take without spoliation. Love redeems every loving act, however dreadful it may appear to the onlooker, for love is redemption, as an excess is always embodied in virtue.

This is a hard doctrine and capable of much dubious interpretation. There is a terrible risk involved in preaching a gospel of love to unlovable people. We all know that the most insidious thing about modern propaganda is its assumption of regard for humanity. The Nazi machine is most horrible when it talks of saving Europe, and its tone can deceive the elect. But we don't need to go to Germany for an example of false doctrine. We are ourselves satiated with the kind of talk which is unadulterated will to power, with love invoked as a necessary condition. The capacity of mankind to deceive, even itself, is astounding. Love, as a word, should be driven out of currency if we were honest, for terrible crimes are committed in its name. The dreadful lust to make love another security is driving man mad. Before the simplest manifestation of love has any real meaning, the idea that it can ever be a security must be purged from mankind. The Englishman's notion that because his nation achieved something once, it can carry on in the assumption that a thing once done needs no doing again, is on a par with his hypocrisy in believing that once is enough to woo a wife. Until recently the average working-class man shied at having a house of his own because he was intimidated at the prospect of renewal and repairing costs. But the notion that once he married, the wife became a bit of property which stayed put, was and is the general one. Loving, like all affirmations, needs to be expressed time and time again. And this requires a devil of an effort. But once we give ourselves up to the initial act, the beginning of

love, we must steadily go on and on, though a herculean effort is needed all the time. This is more than the general level of mankind can bear, bankrupt as it is of anything to love with. There is no renaissance possible unless mankind can be liberated from its doubts and hesitations. Once we permit ourselves to be scared by the implications of a generous act, we rend and destroy, or, with the infinite capacity of man to justify the most dreadful situation, we take refuge in discipline.

Obviously, we cannot discipline something which does not exist. Michelangelo took the excess of the Renaissance period and froze it into the walls of the Sistine Chapel. But Rembrandt lived in times when the old Renaissance spirit had died. Literally, there was nothing to discipline. The great need was for the establishment of an essential faith, and the faith, in life itself, was latent, as it always is. The artist's function was to create it in order to liberate man. Thus we see that the Dutch interior was flooded with light from outside the picture, and always there was the open door through which man could walk. This is the only art which has any meaning for our time. Anything less is irrelevant: Man must be given a belief in himself or he perishes. But we can be blind to the process of perishing, however we idealise it, and can come to believe that decay is life. We can discipline the process of dying, as Britain is attempting to do now, but the creation of new life never becomes the prerogative of dictators. We know them for what they are, tyrants under the banner of love. The old tag of being cruel to be kind is a lie which needs pinning down for what it is. The idea that a free people needs a discipline because excess in the past led to licence is beside the point when nobody feels free, as they do now. Even a lorry driver chatted in my

hearing of helping a fellow driver once, but it "wasn't the kind of thing one did twice." Once we put the limit on, we cease to be generous. I know it is hard to go on helping here and being generous there, seemingly to unworthy mortals. The heartache and distress involved in manifesting ordinary commonplace courtesies, in a vulgar ostentatious world, are hard enough, but to attempt the regeneration of an unregenerate humanity sends one down into the pit of despair. However, when humanity is set on stewing in its own foul juice, it is not for us to add to it. The greater the effort needed the more we must strive to bring a new flavour into the mixture.*

And we must begin with ourselves. There is far too much chatter about *others* being unworthy. We are all pretty sour and suspicious. There is no point in merely ceasing to be ungenerous and sinful. Such a negation is a sanction of the thing we deplore. If we begin to love, something to love with will come of itself, and something to love and live for will quickly come into the picture. Let us be clear that cruelty to be kind is an abomination of the devil, and that power comes of its own free will or not at all. It isn't a question of trusting others, it is a question of being faithful to the life and love within us. Being generous at all cost may bring personal disaster. It brought Jesus to the Cross. We in ourselves matter little. Our personal sufferings are an insignificant portion of the ills of a decadent world. Democracy is an abstraction to any other than a democrat, and is certainly decadent now, but love is a tag unless we are lovers. And love is a task, for loving leaves no time for jackdaw judgments. A great awakening to the wonder and miracle of what can be will quickly bring a desire to create the necessary conditions in which man can

manifest the divine. We talk of God after we have done our best to smother Him out of existence. And people want so badly to be shown the way to God. How can we persuade people that the real enemy of human and divine values is the false image of themselves and not the "other fellow"? When will we be in a position to show people that looking upwards is an escape to-day, and that looking inwards is the surest way of learning to comprehend that which we must worship? Unless we know God as the unknowable, and are content to surrender ourselves to the unknown, there is no health in us. The man who manifests the living truth may find every other man's hand against him, but he will have no time for enmity. Like the grace in heavy labour which is an integral part of a strong man, the spirit of the divine mellows and ripens, and becomes more and more gracious in adversity and hatred. A wilderness cannot be reclaimed by a gyro-tractor alone, but depends upon the imaginative sensitivity of a wholesome mind. And so with the fen of doubt: it too needs more than organisation (which is often negation) and more than the setting up of machinery, it needs the very bowels of man, and the heart and brain. The real enemy is not Hitler, nor yet the Nazi, Fascist, or what you will, but the petty niggling, the narrow faith, the fear at the heart of things. There is no passion, no colour, no vitality in the mass of people. This niggardly strain puts the virtues on an unattainable pedestal and so refines them out of existence, or else it nullifies the vices. Left alone it is cut off from the mainstream. Neutrality becomes the supreme virtue. And who wants to be neutralised? Sterile, impotent, arid—who really desires to be these things?

If we wish for worldly gain neutrality is necessary. But it is better to hate than to become the

negation of life. Judgment is a negation. Loyalty to a hateful cause is better than that. Once we begin to love and become lovable there is no time for judgment. Getting on with the job is not a suppression of criticism: doing a job is in itself the only criticism which has any validity. Either we do one job or another. Either we love or hate. To stand aside is an insult to the Divine Image in man. This is the enemy of our time, the popular enemy. But who are we to talk of enemies when a new earth and a new heaven await the building? Bitter suspicion serves no purpose. Nor does the Grand Inquisitor do other than send us raging away. Only the liberating spirit of a living God can free us from the pit of our own digging. It is no use waiting until people reform. The thing to do is to begin right now to give full reign to the love within us, and trust that the cost will find us strong enough to pay it.

The strength will come sure enough. However superhuman the task appears to be, the strength has always been given. We may say: but our enemy is a nation which takes no account of pleading and protest, and besides, he is much stronger than we are. The enemy is always strong. He couldn't be an enemy if he was weak. Mighty he is, but we can be mightier. If there seems to be no limit to the degradation man can perpetuate, there is also no end to his achievements. At Langham we bear daily witness to the generosity which makes our very existence as a community potential. People are anxious to help in the creation of a pattern different from that which concerns masses of people. Although I have never doubted the capacity of man to manifest the divine, I am humbled by the extent of simple generosity shown in a variety of ways. This is real peace-making, real loving, a real approach to God. Why is it so? The

simple marvel of being alive, in a moribund world, makes the angel in man dance for joy. It is for us to testify that truth is within our capacity, for us to have the guts to go on, not ruthlessly, but with the bowels of compassion. We doubt the issue only when we fall by the way. The stream will bear us on if we abide by the love within us, and cherish it by liberating it, setting it free in a dark world. We must stand on the cathedral steps of this world as a testimony of love, and the love must be in us, and with us. Then will we love and be lovable, and the enemy may do what he will.

JUNE COMMUNIQUE

June comes, and the bayonet
Picks the heart out of the rose,
And our betrayed minds close
Soothed by the subtle fingers of the
heat.

Better when winter froze
Us, and we thought with pain,
Than now to acquiesce
In the macabre finesse
With which war rots the brain.

The rose's crimson petals
Fall beneath our boots,
Their beauty settles
Into dust
Before our rifles rust.

Through the aisle of slim green
birches
The tank imperviously lurches,
Dead to the sea of beauty
Lapping at its doors.
We are told this is our duty,
We are not allowed to pause,
Or our minds might find some flaws
In our armour or our laws.

We are shut in with June
And war's unreason.
This is the dullard's season.

BRUCE BAIN.

The Adelphi Centre THE ADELPHI

"The Faith, which is the only reason *The Adelphi* has for struggling to maintain itself, may be called a faith in the necessity of the imagination. What we call imagination is, in the Christian tradition, called Love; but Christian profession has been so deeply compromised by its piecemeal surrender to materialism and nationalism that the word has lost its virtue. If the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?

"'Imagination,' said William Blake, 'is the Human Existence itself.' Except the spark of imagination be kept alive—in politics, in religion, in living, in our attitude towards past, present, and future—human existence must suffer a degradation the more profound because it is imperceptible. The moment comes when with all the power and devotion we can command we have to strive, despite all appearance of failure, against the dehumanisation of humanity.

"To that effort *The Adelphi* has always been dedicated. In the fifteen years since it was founded the human situation has gone with sickening acceleration from bad to worse, until we have reached a point where even good men are afraid to be honest. Yet without honesty, there is no remedy. *The Adelphi* is not a comfortable magazine; it has not spared its own illusions; and it has no intention of sparing other men's. It does not believe that there is an easy way to salvation either in politics or religion. But that there is a way, it is convinced, and the way is summed up for it in the sentence of William Blake which is its motto: 'Religion is Politics and Politics is Brotherhood.'

"Thus *The Adelphi* stands for Christian Socialism and Christian Pacifism, but above all for a renaissance of imaginative Chris-

tianity. It believes that reverence for the individual is a Christian inheritance which cannot be preserved apart from the Christian faith. It believes that Democracy and Socialism, apart from the spirit of Christ, become evil. It believes that Pacifism is a will o' the wisp, unless its adherents are prepared to follow Christ and to seek strength and sustenance from God through Him. It believes that the re-formation of the Universal Church of Christ in the sense of 'the blessed company of all faithful people' is the one absolute necessity in a world faced, as never before, with the choice between Life and Death, between God and the Devil.

"On the basis of this conviction *The Adelphi* strives after comprehensiveness and tolerance. Its attitude is one of Christian catholicity. For it, Christianity is essentially the religion of inward revolution."

Thus we wrote some four years ago. Subsequent events have served to strengthen both our conviction and the sense of its urgency. But the very events which make it urgent make it also harder than ever to convey. The obstacles in the way of keeping any journal alive at the present day are formidable; for one like *The Adelphi* which can, at best, appeal only to a few, they are almost insurmountable. Already before the war, we had been forced to reduce the magazine to one fifth of its original size, if it was to be paid for at all by its handful of loyal and generous, but seldom wealthy subscribers. Since the war, costs of production have risen; subscriptions have fallen off; and now, with the latest restrictions on paper, we have been ordered to reduce yet again: to twelve pages. Twelve pages for 9d. We cannot expect readers to afford this in times like the present. In order to minimise the cost of production and postage,

therefore, we shall henceforward be issuing *The Adelphi* in its old form of a quarterly, at 1s. 6d. (6s. per annum post free). The magazine in 1942 will thus comprise between 30 and 40 pages (set in double column, as at present, in order to retain the maximum amount of reading matter) and be enclosed, once more, in the familiar yellow cover. We trust that readers will continue to support it in this form as they have always done in the past. The first edition will be issued in the middle of January.

MAX PLOWMAN

I feel with Christmas drawing near that I cannot let the festive season pass without paying tribute to Max Plowman: Max, who for us at Langham stands for all we are striving for, but most of all for peace on earth. I, who live in Max's house and handle Max's possessions, feel very humble in his presence; and I am always in his presence, therefore I am forever humble. I count it the crowning honour of my life that the mantle which was his should even cast its shadow upon me. His tolerance, his humour, yes and even his fury still have repercussions at Langham. He is remembered with love by all, and his influence still works amongst us. So though his bodily part has been taken away yet he is ever here, and the fragrance that is himself still lingers. "Our Red Indian Max" they call him: and a friend wrote of "Max pouring out tea for the old ladies with all the distinction and courtesy of a Spanish don." But to me he is more than this. He is a faith and a trust, given to me like a torch, that I should have a Light to help me over the dark places.

D.W.

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REVIEWS

New Year Letter

W. H. Auden. *Faber*, 10s. 6d.

Once the darling of the intelligent reviews, W. H. Auden is somewhat out of favour at present. Some sections of the public dismissed him early, disliking his politics of the time or impatient with the "difficulty" of his writing; others adhered to him longer because he became a fashion among the intelligentsia, and these perhaps adhere to him still; meanwhile the Left, which had considered him a spokesman, has gradually abandoned him as his regrettable "tendency to flop on to his knees" has developed. For some time he has been in transition, and he is still in it, a moving target mercifully difficult for those reviewers who like to pigeon-hole their writers to hit with any accuracy. What he has to say now is not likely to be well received or widely understood. But this will not be because it is textually difficult; rather because his disquieting insight into the sins and sicknesses of the age, and, more important, their appropriate penances and purges, reveal Auden as something of a prophet, a man seeking wisdom and speaking truth: it is inevitable that he should be without honour in his own country.

It is not of much importance to inquire what public and private experiences have rushed the barricades of intellectualism, releasing the poetic imagination which they formerly obscured from all but the most observant and bringing about in Auden the necessary creative change. What is of importance is the change itself: Auden is now revealed unashamedly flopping on to his knees and there towering above his former self, as in the truest sense a poet. Of necessity the old Adam dies hard; *New Year Letter*

shows his earlier faults, if it shows them less: there are too many obscure allusions kept as private secrets, too many impressively archaic or foreign words and phrases, too much facility (and so occasional superficiality) of writing. But the barricades are down; the exalted intellect has been put behind him, recognised for the spirit that denies (see in particular lines 469-528), and the new man emerges into the freedom of the poetic imagination, there recognising in turn his kinship with Blake, Goethe, Rilke, Jung, certain of the mystics and others not named but certainly to be understood.

The poem (which is printed with a series of short poems called *The Quest*) is heavily annotated; but these notes are in fact as important as the poem and entirely relevant to it; if there is still in them a touch of the old love of showing off it is a light one.

New Year Letter is the work of an opened heart and a fluid mind; it states clearly much that was only to be guessed at in the content of Auden's earlier work. Everywhere there is a sense of a new and intense vision, making the poem a rarity and a necessity of these directionless times, a philosophic poem in the real meaning of the word, about the love of wisdom, man's need to be reborn into it, and the ways in which he may achieve such a regeneration. Auden arrived, in one sense, long ago. Now he has departed for a goal at which he will never arrive; but the journey is one on which he is accompanied by the best before him and on which he deserves to be accompanied by any of those among his contemporaries who have the hardihood and the sense of social necessity required. Those who have lost touch with him, or judge him on the work of even only a few years ago, will do well to read *New Year Letter*.

R. H. WARD

The National Average: A study in social discipline.

Alexander Miller.

Shadwell Group, 3d.

Discipline certainly we all need: Mr. Miller does well to emphasise this aspect of his scheme. Unless a man has the capacity voluntarily to undergo a rule of this kind, he is passion's slave. Furthermore, few will deny the value, as testimony of a rule that is visible and explicable.

But Mr. Miller, in his lucid and readable defence of individual limitation of income to a mean obtained by dividing the "National Income" by the population, claims for it more than this. The income is a man's share, a man's right; it is "justice" translated "into the most practical terms." Is it, however, a perfectly real quantity? Even if income be conceived materially as goods, obviously any balance between, for example, vegetarian and flesh-eater, can be upset by changed relative prices: and income is psychological, consisting of "satisfactions" that are utterly incommensurable.

Mr. Miller is rarely dogmatic, but this theory is of the nature of dogma—one of the many foredoomed attempts to crystallise, clamp down, and analyse that tender love of man for man which is the most precious and the most perishable thing in the world.

V. BAKER.

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